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## SDM Council approves budget, focused on service delivery acceleration



SDM Councillor from the EFF, Ali Maloba, outlining inputs during the special council meeting.



SDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, reaffirmed that the district municipality remains prioritizing bulk water supply projects to the communities.

**GROBLERSDAL** - Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) committed to push ahead with bulk water projects and infrastructure upgrades. This was revealed when municipality council approves its 2026/2027 budget at a special council meeting, held on Wednesday 27 May 2026 at SDM headquarters in Groblersdal.

The municipality said the budget approval formed the financial backbone for expanded service delivery, infrastructure development, water provision, and local economic growth programmes across the district.

During the engagement, among the major resolutions adopted was the approval of the Final Budget and Medium-Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF)-related policies for the 2026/2027 to 2028/2029 financial years.

The municipality said the approved budget is expected to enhance service delivery programmes, infrastructure development, water provision, and economic growth initiatives that will directly benefit communities throughout the district.

The council also noted the report on the 2026/2027 Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Review Public Participation Programme.

**CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE**

## Commissioner Hadebe leads Operation Shanela, 307 arrests made

**LIMPOPO** - A week-long, Provincial Commissioner-led Operation Shanela, has delivered major results across Limpopo, with police arresting 307 suspects and shutting down 23 unlicensed liquor outlets between Sunday 24 and Sunday 31 May 2026.

According to the police, the intensified operations were rolled out in all five districts of the province. Limpopo Provincial Police Commissioner, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, and her deputies, personally joined high-density operations in Sekhukhune on Thursday 28 May, and in Mopani on Friday 29 May 2026.

Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the operations focused on tackling serious and violent crimes, tracing wanted suspects, combating illicit trade, enforcing liquor legislation, and enhancing police visibility in identified crime hotspots.

"Among the arrests recorded were four counts of murder, four cases of robbery with aggravating circumstances, and one robbery at residential premises. Police also arrested five suspects for rape, 41 for assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm, 18 for common assault, and 26 for malicious damage to property," informed Ledwaba.

In terms of firearms and weapons, Ledwaba informed that five suspects were arrested for illegal possession of firearms and 10 for possession of dangerous weapons.

"6 suspects were arrested for possession of drugs and seven for dealing in drugs. Police arrested 15 suspects for illegal dealing in liquor, four for possession of illegal cigarettes, and four for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs," he said.

Ledwaba indicated that the operation also yielded arrests for five business burglaries and eight residential burglaries, with a total of 61 illegal migrants arrested during the week, and 197 suspects arrested

for other offences.

"Police confiscated various items linked to criminal activities during the operations. These included two firearms, 38 rounds of ammunition, 18 dangerous weapons, six cellphones, and R1 738 in cash. Officers also seized 154.34 litres of alcoholic beverages, 33 packets of tobacco products, 0.1 grams of crystal meth, and 5 254.79 kilograms of dagga," he said.

To boost compliance, police inspected 1 443 liquor premises, 193 secondhand dealers, and 31 scrapyards.

"A total of 6 084 informal businesses, such as spaza shops, were inspected to ensure labour law compliance. During the week-long operations, 7 701 people were searched and 4 951 vehicles were searched. Police also closed 23 unlicensed liquor premises," said Ledwaba.

He said some of the arrested suspects have already appeared before various magistrates' courts across the province, while others are expected to appear soon.

Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, commended the dedication displayed by police members and all law enforcement stakeholders who participated in the operations.

She said the successes recorded during Operation Shanela are commendable as community safety remains a priority at all times.

Having joined members on the ground in Sekhukhune and Mopani, she said she witnessed firsthand their commitment, resilience and determination to serve the people of Limpopo. Hadebe encouraged all law enforcement officers to remain steadfast in their mission to protect communities. She said criminals must know that police will continue to intensify operations, maintain a strong presence in crime hotspots and relentlessly pursue those who choose to violate the law.

## Youth outreach in Roossenekal links young people to services



Scores of young people from Roossenekal and surrounding areas were exposed to different opportunities offered during the Youth Outreach Programme.

**ROOSSENEKAL** - The Office of the Mayor in Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality (EMLM), through the municipality's Youth Desk, brought a dynamic Youth Outreach Programme to the community of Roossenekal in EMLM Ward 30.

The event, held at Roossenekal Community Hall on Wednesday 27 May 2026, brought essential government services and opportunities directly to local young people.

During the event, EMLM Ward 30 Councillor, Tobius Malope, made a call for young people to take ownership of their future.

He applauded all attendees and stakeholders, stating that youth development is the cornerstone of sustainable community growth. He urged participants to make full use of the departments and agencies on site, noting that platforms like this close the gap between government and the communities it serves.

The outreach programme convened young people, government departments, and development agencies in a coordinated effort to improve access to opportunities,

essential services, and youth development programmes that support sustainable community growth.

A range of stakeholders participated in the programme, including the Compliance Office, Department of Labour, Local Economic Development (LED), National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Department of Home Affairs, and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

These institutions provided information and support on employment opportunities, entrepreneurship development, compliance matters, civic participation, identity documentation, voter education, and broader youth empowerment initiatives.

The municipality stated that the programme reaffirmed its commitment, together with its partners, to strengthening sustainable platforms that promote youth development, active citizenship, and economic inclusion.

The municipality further extended its sincere gratitude to all participating departments, stakeholders, and community members for their valuable contributions to the success of the programme.

### CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Different stakeholders, including Magoši, people with disabilities, ratepayers, and community members actively participated in the process, demonstrating the municipality's commitment to participatory democracy and inclusive governance.

In strengthening institutional governance, the council further approved the assessment report relating to Section 57 senior managers reporting directly to the Municipal Manager, Meshack Kgwale, thereby, enabling them to fully execute their responsibilities in advancing municipal programmes and service delivery objectives. During her presentation, SDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, emphasized the importance of strengthening the municipality's financial sustainability.

"The municipality should move swiftly to enhance its revenue and amplify its economic viability while reducing overdependence on grants," said Bahula.

She further reaffirmed that bulk water supply projects remain among the municipality's highest priorities.

"Bulk water supply remains one of the most prioritized projects of the municipality as it bridges the gap relating to water shortages in our communities," she said.

In a milestone achievement that received applause from the council, Bahula announced the successful categorization of Sekhukhune District Municipality to Grade 5 status. The Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) has directed the municipality to implement the Grade 5 categorization.

The categorization to Grade 5 relates solely to the remuneration packages of municipal managers and managers directly accountable to municipal managers.

This development signifies institutional growth and increased capacity for the municipality, positioning the district municipality to improve service delivery, strengthen administration, attract critical skills, and better respond to the developmental needs of communities.



Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, led the recent Operation Shanela conducted at Sekhukhune and Mopani respectively.

# SDM bids farewell to retiring Limpopo SAPS Commissioner Hadebe



SDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, commended General Hadebe for her role in fighting crime and maintaining order in the province.

**MOGORWANE** - Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) joined Limpopo SAPS and community leaders on Thursday 28 May 2026, in paying tribute to Limpopo Provincial Police Commissioner, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, as she prepares for retirement after years of SAPS service.

As part of the retirement tribute, SAPS convened a Stakeholders Engagement Session at Boeketlong Business Lodge in Mogorwane Village outside Jane Furse to reflect on Hadebe's contribution to law enforcement and community safety across the province.

The gathering brought together traditional leaders, government representatives, and SAPS members.

During the event, SDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, addressed the session and acknowledged SAPS role in fighting crime and maintaining order.

She commended General Hadebe for her commitment, leadership and service excellence throughout her tenure.

Bahula urged members of the SAPS to continue to uphold and build on the legacy left by General Hadebe to make communities safer for all residents.

The engagement focused on

strengthening partnerships between police and stakeholders, while also honouring Hadebe's long-standing dedication to the organisation.

Sekhukhune District Municipality said it joins the people of Limpopo in wishing Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe well in her retirement and future endeavours.

Later on the day, Hadebe engaged in Sekhukhune leg of Operation Shanela, which came days after the SDM distanced itself from a widely circulated poster calling for a march against illegal immigrants.

The municipality said it did not sanction or endorse the poster and that its logo was used without authorisation.

It warned that government has consistently cautioned against such protests because they often lead to violence, vigilantism and criminality, and urged residents to respect the rule of law and promote social cohesion.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has also cautioned against vigilantism linked to anti-immigrant protests, saying such lawlessness will not be tolerated, while acknowledging that undocumented migration places pressure on services.



The SDM has bid farewell to retiring Limpopo Provincial Police Commissioner Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe.

## D4239 Road falls apart, Ngwaabe communities cut off by broken promises



Residents of various villages in Ngwaabe area, Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality, are concerned about the deplorable state of their main road.

**GA-MAEPA** - The D4239 Provincial Road, meant to link Ga-Maepa, Mphana, Ga-Maphopha and Ratau Villages in the Ngwaabe area, Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality (FTLM) Ward 29, has deteriorated into what residents call 'a stretch of craters with tar in between'.

The road was upgraded from gravel to tar just a few years ago. Today, dongas and potholes line almost every kilometer, making travel dangerous and often impossible after rain.

According to residents, ambulances refuse night trips, taxis sometimes charge double, and farmers say produce rots before it reaches markets in Burgersfort.

"It was shoddy work from day one. They used cheap material, the quality is bad. The road is bad and inaccessible for communities. A sick child cannot get to clinic on time. A scholar transport cannot reach our children. We were promised development, we got dust and damage," said a community leader Evans Mabowa.

Mabowa added that every time it rains, the tar lifts like old paint. "The contractor is gone, but our problems remain. If this is what they call upgraded infrastructure, then Ward 29 deserves better than leftovers," he said. An elderly pensioner, Mmapula Ledwaba, from Mphana Village, said she now walks to Ratau just to catch a reliable taxi.

"My legs are tired, but what can I do? The taxi drivers say their suspensions break

every week on this road. So they avoid us," she said.

Kabelo Maphopha from Ga-Maphopha, told the paper he misses class when it rains. "The scholar transport gets stuck in the dongas. Then we must wait for a tractor to pull it out. We lose days of learning because of a road," he said.

Small business owners said deliveries to their businesses in Ratau Village have dropped by half. "Suppliers refuse to come in. They say fix your road first. How do we fix it? It's not our road," said a local businessman.

Mabowa also raised disappointment over the unfinished access bridge at Maseven Village. Construction started months ago but is very slow, leaving residents to cross a swollen stream using logs and tyres.

"The government is taking time to complete the project and we have doubts that it will ever be completed. Children cross that water to get to school. One day someone will drown while we wait for years for the project to be completed. We need action, not excuses," he said.

Ward 29 residents are now calling on Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality and Limpopo Roads Agency to urgently re-assess the D4239 and complete the Maseven bridge before the next rainy season. Attempts to get comment from Roads Agency Limpopo at time of publication were unsuccessful.



Dozens of police members from across Limpopo converged at Mogorwane Village to pay tribute to retiring Limpopo Provincial Police Commissioner, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe

**GROBLERSDAL** - A routine prisoner transport turned tragic on Friday 29 May 2026, when a state police vehicle collided with a tractor on the N11 national route near Roslyn Farm outside Groblersdal. Three prisoners and one police officer sustained serious injuries and are receiving treatment at Groblersdal Hospital.

The Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety confirmed the crash occurred while the police van was en route to Middelburg with inmates in custody.

According to department Spokesperson, Mashudu Mabata, it is alleged that a tractor was crossing the road when the collision occurred.

Emergency services responded rapidly to the scene. Mabata said all four injured persons were swiftly transported to Groblersdal Hospital, where they are currently receiving urgent medical treatment for their wounds. She added that the department wishes all those injured a speedy recovery and thanked stakeholders who

assisted at the scene.

The department said it is working to establish the full sequence of events leading to the crash.

The N11 between Middelburg and Groblersdal has a history of serious collisions. In February 2022 a head-on crash between a truck and sedan near Loskop Dam claimed six lives, including a toddler. In March 2022, three people were killed and three critically injured when a truck and LDV sideswiped near Doornkop.

More recently, September 2024 saw five people die in a head-on collision on the N11 between Marble Hall and Groblersdal after an SUV overtook unsafely.

MEC for Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety, Violet Mathye, has repeatedly warned motorists about the incessant occurrence of accidents, where people perish in large numbers on Limpopo roads.

Limpopo Operation Arrive Alive remains active on high-risk routes including the N11, especially during long weekends and peak travel periods.

## Injuries reported after police van collides with tractor near Groblersdal



A police member and three awaiting trial prisoners were seriously injured after a police vehicle collided with a tractor on the N11 Road outside Groblersdal.

## Elias Motsoaledi Council adopts IDP Budget, prioritizes roads, electricity and jobs

**GROBLERSDAL** - The Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality (EMLM) Council has officially adopting the 2026/2027 Annual Budget and Integrated Development Plan (IDP) to speed up service delivery and infrastructure upgrades.

The IDP was adopted during a special council meeting convened at the Elias Motsoaledi Municipal Chamber in Groblersdal on Thursday 28 May 2026, chaired by Council Speaker Cllr Junior Thehe.

After months of public consultations with ward committees, traditional leaders and residents, the council gave the green light to a budget aimed at responsive governance, sustainable development and financial accountability.

Key priorities for the year ahead, presented by EMLM Mayor Cllr David Tladi, mainly focus is on fixing what matters most to communities, including upgrading and maintenance of roads infrastructure, expansion of electricity support infrastructure

and stronger revenue collection and financial sustainability.

Tladi added that local economic development and job creation will also be prioritized as well as better public participation and accountability.

The municipality's major projects on the cards which are part of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) funding include the Tafelkop Bapeding Bus Route upgrade which is currently on contractor appointment stage, Waalkraal Bus Route upgrade currently under construction, OR Tambo/Elandsdoorn Sports Stadium at planning phase and the refurbishment of Groblersdal Landfill Site with its implementation resuming.

Twelve MIG-funded high-mast lighting projects are also underway across communities to improve public safety and access to basic services.

The municipality tabled revenue of R854 million against expenditure of R842 million, leaving a R12 million surplus. Total spending is 4% lower than

last year due to reduced DoRA allocations.

Grants make up R460 million of the budget, down R96 million from 2025/2026. Revenue is up 2% and tariff/property rate increases were kept in line with CPI. In approved hikes, the municipality will implement a 7.6% electricity increase and 3.4 property rates hike. "Debt collection remains a priority", the municipality said.

The operating budget sits at R842 million, with the capital budget at R81 million funded through MIG, the Integrated National Electrification Programme, and internal funds.

Mayor Tladi thanked ward committees, traditional leaders, civil society and municipal officials "for their meaningful contribution throughout the IDP and budget consultation process".

Council closed the sitting by reaffirming its commitment to transparent governance and partnerships with communities "in pursuit of sustainable development and an improved quality of life for all residents".



EMLM Mayor, Cllr David Tladi, addressing the IDP special council meeting convened at the Elias Motsoaledi Municipal Chamber in Groblersdal.



EMLM councillors participating during the IDP special council meeting.



# Ga-Marishane residents decry R200-00 fee for community sports ground



Residents of Ga-Marishane and surrounding villages have to fork-out R200-00 payment fee to their municipality before using the public sporting facility.



High-mast lights are failing the community

**GA-MARISHANE** - What was meant to be an upgrade has turned into a barrier for Ga-Marishane residents, who say the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality's (MLM) new R200-00 usage fee is locking young people out of the very facility the community helped build.

Before MLM upgraded the sports ground, residents pooled money from their own pockets to construct a tennis court and netball facility. For years, the multi-sporting facility served as a free hub for soccer training, school sports, and weekend community games.

Residents claim that changed after the municipality took over management and introduced a R200 charge for anyone using the facility. Residents say the fee applies even to practice and training sessions, not just tournaments.

The impact is already visible. A local coach who used the ground to train young boys has stopped the program entirely. "He cannot afford to pay the municipality. Now those boys have nowhere to go after school," one resident who did not want to be named explained.

Community members warn the consequences go beyond sport. "We are worried that young people have been denied access and they end up engaging in immoral activities doing drugs and crime because they have nothing to do and roam the streets," the resident said.

Coaches and volunteers who ran free soccer and netball training can't cover R200-00 per session. Several grassroots programs have collapsed.

The community is concerned that with the ground off-limits, teenagers spend more time on the streets after school instead of on the field. Residents link this to a rise in loitering and petty crime.

Many feel betrayed after contributing labour and money to build the tennis and netball courts, only to now be charged to use them.

Local schools that relied on the facility for inter-school practice now struggle to find affordable alternatives.

The fee has created tension between residents who can pay and those who can't, eroding the sense of a shared community space.

"The community is disappointed with the payment. We were using the facility for free and it kept our children busy. Now we're paying for it with crime and drugs," a concerned resident said.

Even as the municipality claims to have developed the facility, residents say the upgrade is not compliant with basic standards.

They complain that the soccer pitch has been shortened to about 80 meters instead of the regulation 100 meters, making it unsuitable for proper matches.

Toilets at the facility are not working, and high-mast lights are failing, leaving the ground unsafe after dark. The pitch lawn is also patchy and eroded, with large bare and uneven sections that residents describe as worn-out and badly degraded turf.

There is also no water at the facility because boreholes constructed by Makhuduthamaga Municipality are dilapidated and no longer functional.

According to residents, the ward councillor claims the municipality announced the fee to collect revenue. "How can they collect revenue on the facility that does not actually belong to the municipality?" asked one concerned resident.

MLM has not yet responded to the publication's requests for comment.



Marishane community constructed a tennis and netball court.

# Four arrested on Dennilton kidnapping and pension robbery case

**DENNILTON** - A joint police operation in Gauteng has led to the arrest of four suspects linked to the kidnapping and robbery of a 65-year-old pensioner in Dennilton.

Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, confirmed that four suspects, aged between 19 and 36, were arrested during an intelligence-driven operation conducted on Saturday 30 May 2026.

"The suspects were tracked down through intelligence in Rankuwa and Mabopane. The multidisciplinary team included officers from Groblersdal, Pretoria North, Dennilton Detectives, and the Sekhukhune Tracking and Investigation Team," he said.

Ledwaba said the victim was kidnapped and robbed of pension funds, alleging that the money was then transferred from the victim's bank account into several other accounts.

"The arrested suspects are expected to appear before the Moutse Magistrate's Court soon to face charges of kidnapping and house robbery," he said.

Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, Limpopo Provincial Police Commissioner, praised the team for their dedication and commitment in tracking the suspects across provinces.



The police have arrested suspects in relation to kidnapping and robbery of a 65-year-old pensioner from Dennilton.

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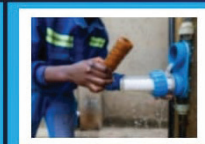
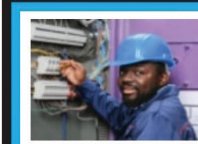
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## SDM distance itself from alleged planned march against illegal immigrants



The Sekhukhune District Municipality distances itself from anti-immigrants protest posters circulating on various social media platforms.

### SEKHUKHUNE

The Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) distanced itself from the widely circulated poster allegedly calling on residents to participate in the planned march against illegal

immigrants.

"The Municipality did not sanction, endorse, or associate itself with the poster including the unauthorised use of the "supposed Municipality's logo", said SDM spokesperson Lemson Moropjane.

He said, the national government has consistently cautioned against such protests, as they often lead to violence, vigilantism, and criminality.

SDM Mayor Minah Bahula said, "As part of the government collective, the Sekhukhune District Municipality remains committed to the principles of constitutional democracy and operates within the confines of the law."

The Municipality further encouraged all residents to respect the rule of law and promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within communities.

## Driver involved in fatal taxi accident granted bail



The taxi which was allegedly driven by Mogau Mosehla.

### GA MASEMOLA

The 44-year-old taxi driver, Mogau Mosehla, who was arrested in connection with a tragic minibus taxi fire incident that claimed the lives of two school children in Masemola, appeared before the Nebo Magistrate's Court on Wednesday, 20 May.

The accused was granted bail of R6 000 and the matter was postponed to 21 August 2026.

The incident occurred on Wednesday, 13 May 2026, at about 15:15 along the Apel Cross Road via the Tswaing gravel road towards Nkotwokwane Village.

"It is alleged that a Toyota Quantum minibus taxi transporting approximately 22 school children between the

ages of 7 and 10 years, together with the driver, from school to their homes, caught fire while travelling on the gravel road.

"Two children died inside the burning vehicle, while seven others sustained injuries and were transported to hospital for medical treatment. Thirteen children escaped unharmed," said Limpopo SAPS spokesman Colonel Malesela Ledwaba.

Ledwaba said SAPS opened two counts of culpable homicide as well as charges relating to contravention of the National Road Traffic Act, including overloading and failure to produce an operating certificate. The police investigations are continuing.

# Sports



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SDM bids farewell to retiring Limpopo SAPS Commissioner Hadebe

## Elias Motsoaledi Zonal League resumes

**ELIAS MOTSOALEDI** - The Elias Motsoaledi Zonal League has resumed for another round of the 2026/2027 football season action last weekend, currently running three active streams after formally adopting the Moteti Development League as its third stream.

Now the league caters the Ntwane Zonal League with 10 teams, the Sephaku Zonal League with 9 teams and now a resolution has been reached to include Moteti Zonal League, which has 11 teams and has already completed fixtures over the past three weekends, bringing the competition to three streams for the first and second round.

"We've reached consensus to adopt Moteti Development League as another stream. This stream already finished playing previous 3 weekends," said the league's General Secretary, Johannes Kotelo.

He said fixtures within the league are played in a combo format, with venues changing according to the hosting teams for each match day.

The Ntwane Stream was in action this past weekend with five results recorded. Bhashen FC 1-0 Black Converse, Tuks FC 0-1 Bonhomie United, Bricks FC 2-1 FC Rogers and Young Killers FC 1-3 FC 20.

Kotelo said Sephaku Stream did not play on the weekend due to disruptions from initiation schools, however, stream coordinators informed that they convened a meeting to resolve the matter and make sure is not

repeated.

"Ntwane Stream was already more than ready to play as they were playing preparation mini league all the time and most of players are happy since they waited so long," Kotelo said.

According to Kotelo, a major challenge facing the zonal competition is the annual initiation season.

"Many under-17 players from Ndebele-speaking communities are currently away, while Sotho-speaking areas report similar disruptions as younger brothers are also affected," he said.

Kotelo is appealing to communities around Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality to start new streams. He said the zonal league serves as a direct recruitment drive for Premier League teams and helps develop players for current Hollywoodbets Sekhukhune Regional League and PSL clubs.

"For new areas, the league will operate as open clubs without age limits. Areas with existing active leagues will maintain an under-17 age restriction," he said.

Kotelo called upon teams interested in joining the league to 072 067 7530 or WhatsApp 074 462 6817.

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Elias Motsoaledi Zonal League participants, Bricks FC, is eager to grab the first sport in the league.



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### Connect with us



The new dawn poultry farm



Dikwena FC from Ntwane Village in Dennilton is determined to be competitive in the ongoing Elias Motsoaledi Zonal League.